

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

11 March 1952

SUBJECT: NIE-27/1: CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS
WITH RESPECT TO TAIWAN
(Revised Conclusions for Board Consideration)

THE PROBLEM

To estimate Chinese Communist capabilities and intentions
with respect to Taiwan through 1952.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Except for a substantial increase in air capabilities, the over-all capabilities of the Chinese Communists to launch either a large-scale invasion or limited surprise attacks against Taiwan remain substantially unchanged since April 1951 when NIE-27 was published. Chinese National capabilities to defend Taiwan have not improved substantially since that date.

2. Provided that US policy with respect to Taiwan continues, Chinese Communist operations against Taiwan would almost certainly fail.

a. A large-scale Communist invasion attempt would almost certainly fail unless surprise were achieved to assure a fait accompli before US air and naval forces could

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be brought to bear. We do not believe that, under present circumstances, the Communists could achieve such surprise in a large-scale attack.

b. A Communist attack with a limited number of elite troops probably could achieve surprise, but the Nationalists, without outside assistance, could almost certainly contain such an attack, unless the Communists received timely large-scale reinforcements. US naval and air forces could almost certainly prevent such reinforcements.

3. If US policy with respect to Taiwan should change and the US did not participate in the defense of Taiwan, the Chinese Nationalist forces almost certainly could not successfully defend Taiwan against a large-scale Communist operation.

4. The Chinese Nationalist Government is relatively stable and serious factional strife is not expected so long as Chiang Kai-shek heads the government. Although the demise of Chiang either from death or the unlikely event of a coup d'etat would considerably weaken morale, Nationalist military capabilities to defend Taiwan would be only slightly lessened.

5. On balance, military, propaganda and other indications do not suggest that the Chinese Communists plan an early attack against Taiwan.

6. Irrespective of whether the present situation in Korea continues, an armistice is concluded, or large-scale hostilities are renewed, we believe that the Chinese Communists will not attack Taiwan during the period covered by this estimate provided that the US does not withdraw its commitment for the defense of Taiwan.

7. [We believe that] during the period of this estimate, the Communists ^{will probably} ~~may~~ conduct reconnaissance, nuisance, or destruction raids (either by air or sea) against Nationalist-held offshore islands and may assault and capture some of these islands. However, we do not believe such actions would necessarily indicate that an invasion of Taiwan was imminent.

8. Over the longer term, we believe that the Chinese Communists will attempt to seize Taiwan if a favorable opportunity should present itself. However, if the relative military strength of the United States and the Communists in the Far East remains substantially unchanged, and if US policy with respect to Taiwan is not changed, we believe the Chinese Communists will not hazard a military attack on Taiwan.